



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EST (NOAA)

Agricultural Weather Highlights - Wednesday - March 6, 2002

- ***In the West***, beneficial precipitation continues across the ***Northwest*** and is overspreading ***northern and central California***. However, dry weather is stressing pastures and rain-fed small grains in ***California and Arizona***, and meager high-elevation snow packs are increasing summer water-supply concerns in the ***central and southern Rockies and the Southwest***.
- ***On the Plains***, very cold weather, accompanied by light snow, is returning to ***Montana***, where winter wheat retains a shallow protective snow cover of generally 1 to 5 inches. In contrast, warm weather is rapidly melting snow on the ***central Plains***, and prompting winter wheat to begin breaking dormancy on the ***southern Plains***. Today's high temperatures are forecast to approach 80 degrees F in ***western Texas***.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, cold conditions linger across ***northern areas***, but mild weather is melting the remaining snow cover and creating muddy field conditions in ***southern portions of the region***.
- ***In the South***, warm weather is returning, following recent hard freezes that burned back pastures and emerging winter grains across interior locations.

Outlook: During the next few days, a significant late-winter storm system is forecast to bring some light but beneficial precipitation to ***southern California and the Southwest***, then produce another round of snowfall across the ***upper Midwest***. By Friday, strong to locally severe thunderstorms may develop across the ***South***. The storm system is forecast to reach the ***East Coast*** on Sunday, trailed by a brief return to cold weather in most areas from the ***Plains eastward***. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for March 11-15 calls for cool weather to linger across portions of the ***northern Plains and northern Corn Belt***, but near- to above-normal temperatures across the remainder of the U.S. Heavy precipitation will be confined to ***southern Florida, the Northeast, and the Northwest***, while mostly dry weather is expected across the ***central and southern Plains and the Southwest***.

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